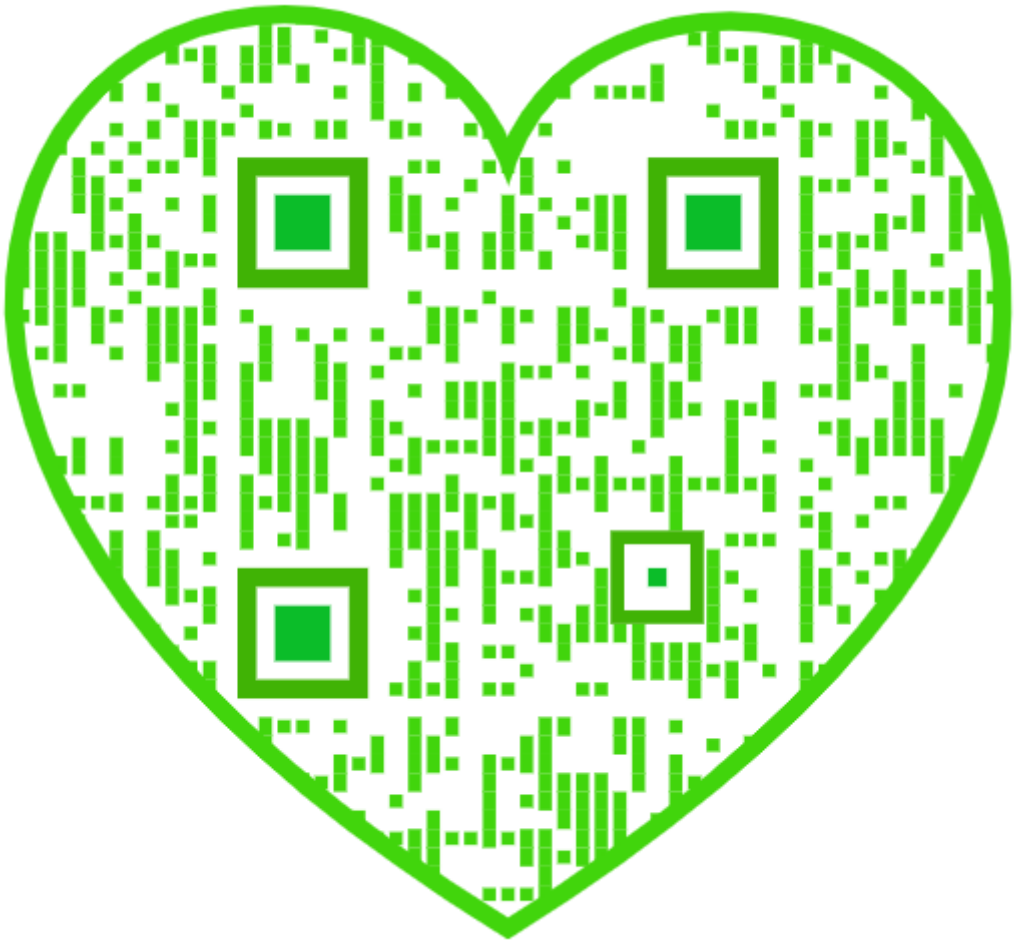
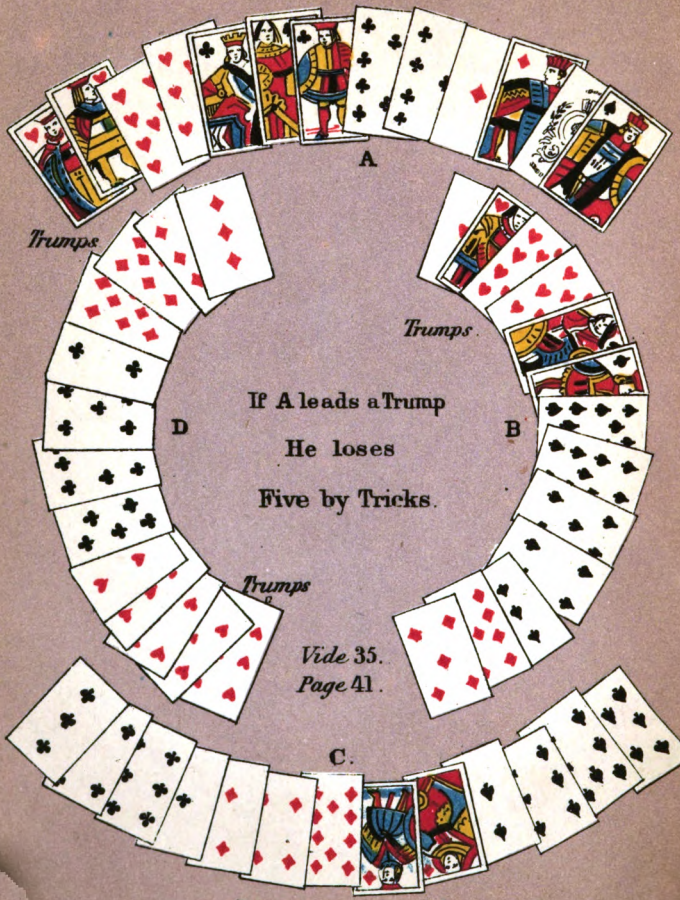


THE

LAWS AND PRACTICE

OF

WHIST.



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THE

LAWS AND PRACTICE

OF

WHIST

BY

CÆLEBS.

"Vous ne savez pas donc le Whiste, jeune homme? Quelle triste vieillesse vous vous préparez!

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,
346 & 348 BROADWAY.
1859.

KC 18522

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD ENGLISH EDITION.

This Manual, though presupposing a knowledge of the plot and organization of Whist, makes no pretension to imparting any new information to good players; but simply offers assistance to beginners. With the exception of the modern artifice for playing trumps, the precepts of Hoyle embody the whole theory of the game: and neither Mathews nor Major A. furnish any intrinsic improvement on his doctrine. These writers, instead of seeking to supply the *desideratum* of a concise and lucid compilation of the veteran's *matériel*, have merely modernized his text, after the style of Mrs. Nickleby's dialectics—inconsequent, rambling, and repetitional. The right doctrine is never in the right place: and we are left as it were with an encyclopædia of Whist without alphabetical arrangement.

Among the original matter in this work, the development of the signal denominated *the Blue Peter* is the most important feature; but the chief task of the author has been to express the precepts of the game in the most precise terms, and to adapt each rule to its logical position.

The decisions appended to the laws are the results of *bonâ fide* bets: but so far from being the mere *dicta* of the author, they do not altogether coincide with his notions.

Portland Club,
London, January, 1858.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH ENGLISH EDITION.

In consequence of the preceding Edition of this Work having been accepted by the Players of the Army and Navy and other clubs, as the best authority on Whist, the author thinks it necessary to mention, that the slight revisions, which have been made in the present Edition, occur only in the text; the Laws remaining unaltered.

Portland Club, W.
April, 1858.

INTRODUCTION.

SINCE the decline of Hoyle, several writers have aspired to supply a standard text-book on Whist; but owing either to a want of prestige, or to individual demerits, one and all have failed alike to usurp an exclusive control over the details of the game. The natural inefficiency of a work published more than a century since to compete with modern improvements, is sufficient to account for the deposition of Hoyle; and the multiplicity of subsequent remodellers, each inculcating his own empirical notions and independent code, is equally sufficient to impede further unanimity. Meantime the government of all whist-rooms stands upon fluctuating conventionalisms: various societies adopting various customs, and different individuals being swayed by different authorities. It may be hopeless, in the face of so many failures, to attempt directing the allegiance of the modern play-world into

a new channel: practically, however, all that is requisite, to prevent disagreement, is a simple notification beforehand of the authority, by which all debateable matter shall be determined. It is in the power of every player, before sitting down, to inquire this point, which, in the case of Clubs, would most properly be settled by the Committee.

Independently of the question of authority, the existing hand-books to Whist are more or less unsatisfactory. Some are positively injurious from their extreme meagreness; while others are too diffuse and immethodical, consisting of bare undigested precepts dotted down in eccentric confusion, unconnected by any theory, and unexplained by any principles.

If Hoyle was not exactly the first who reduced the practice of Whist to a science, he is at least entitled to the credit of having rescued its rules from the vagueness of oral tradition, by giving them (anonymously, in 1743) a printed existence. His laws, having been collected during the infancy of play, are naturally imperfect: so much so, that out of the twenty enactments applicable to Short Whist, contained in his sixteenth edition, only twelve were admitted, without variations, in one of the earliest

revisions in 1775; and scarcely any survive to the present day.

Hoyle has been remodelled by numerous plagiarists, none of whom have attained repute.

Mathews, in 1822, became with respect to authority, what Hoyle was to the older school: but his work is so defective in arrangement that it cannot be recommended to a learner.

Arnaud's "Epitome of Whist," published in Edinburgh, 1829, is remarkable for novelty of arrangement. His maxims afford a tolerably correct synopsis of the game: but being categorically arranged, so as to form as it were a skeleton dictionary of isolated positions, they require to be learned by rote; appealing more to the naked memory than to mental induction.

The introduction of Short Whist called forth, in 1836, the work known under the *nom de plume* of Major A——. With verbose augmentations, the author's instructions are nearly identical with those of Mathews: like whom, he despises any approach to methodical arrangement, continually repeating similar maxims, separating exceptions from rules, and examples from both, jumbling original data with derivative results—presenting altogether such a labyrinth

of advice, and apparent inconsistency, as no pupil can easily unravel. A "little learning" is the sure result of such immethodical treatises, not embracing any general outline before descending to *minutiæ*. The mind must thoroughly understand the cause before it can embrace its consequences: unless acquainted with a whole, it cannot comprehend the symmetry of the parts; but an insulated position appears arbitrary, and the connection is not distinguishable. As difficulties arise, or new matter presents itself, a general principle will afford a rallying point, and we find ourselves possessed of premises from which we may argue.

The rules in Mr. F. P. Watson's edition of Admiral Burney's Treatise are sound and comprehensive, and the classification is a boon to beginners. This work, however, is too meagre to develop the subtleties of the game; the author considering diffuse instructions to be superfluous, in comparison with practical observation and experience.

Partiality for comic literature induced an Amateur to favour us, in 1843, with his lucubrations on Whist. For the historical portion we are under due obligation; but facetious practice at Whist is not a *desideratum*.

The Treatise by the late Mr. J. W. Carleton, em-

bodied in Bohn's "Handbook of Games," 1850, comprises nearly two hundred closely printed pages, divided into four parts, three of which are "revised editions" of Mathews, Hoyle, and Deschapelles; the fourth being "partly original and partly compiled." The importation of Hoyle and Mathews into this volume is probably owing to their copyright having expired; and the elaborate fanfaronnade of M. Deschapelles is more mystifying than instructive. The bulk of Mr. Carleton's contribution will of itself deter many from his portion; and the separate treatment of Long and Short Whist is absurd, since the precepts of both systems are essentially identical.

"The Whist-player, by Lt.-col. B——, 1856." This author claims for himself "a more perspicuous method of imparting his knowledge than former expositors." His method, nevertheless, if by method is meant arrangement of the details of the game, is a mere copy of the present work, with the addition of a few diagrams, which their author calls "pictured impressions." It is a pretty nursery-like book, full of twaddle, and miserably faulty in detail. Even the technical terms are mis-defined. The Laws are certainly *not* "those by which the game is generally

regulated;" and the illustrations, if they teach anything, seem to bear out the writer's confession of but a limited acquaintance with his subject.

But notwithstanding so many publications, the complaint made by Mathews in 1822 is applicable to the present day—that a good player is rarely met with; a fine one scarcely ever. We still continue to hear of some squire, parson, or lawyer, who "plays an excellent rubber;" but who is at best perhaps capable of playing his own hand at the expense of his partner's. The average of such performers merely possess by rote a few empirical rules, which they indiscriminately apply without reflecting that general maxims pre-suppose the game and hand at the commencement; and that the slightest derangement in the data involves a corresponding modification of play. The road to proficiency, on the other hand, is to commence by mastering the principles rather than the apothegms of the game; and though the principles themselves can only be verified in the mind, and impressed on the memory, by constant practice—yet in Whist, as in all other sciences, that practice, which is based on previous study of the rudiments, will assuredly prove the easiest and most perfect. No science can be intuitive; and

the amount of inductive process requisite at Whist constitutes the main element of the moral excellence and peculiar fascination of the game. By some, nevertheless, the toil of learning is dispensed with, because they "play only for amusement." Fine amusement for the unfortunate partner!

TECHNICAL TERMS.

Blue Peter, a signal for trumps (*Vide Art.* 3 *a*).

Bumper, a rubber of full points *i. e.* 5 at long whist; 8 at short.

False-card. When a higher card is unnecessarily played before a lower, without being intended for a blue Peter, it is a false card.

Finesse, endeavouring to make a subordinate card do duty for a superior (*Vide Art.* 4).

Force, leading a renounced suit, in order to force it to be trumped.

King-card, highest remaining of a suit.

Long-trumps, the remaining trumps being in one hand.

Loose-card, i. e. losing card, one not likely to win a trick.

Love, not having scored.

Lurch (at long whist), not saving the double point.

Minor-tenace, the combination of second and fourth best of a suit.

Misdeal, not giving thirteen cards to each hand, in due rotation, when the pack is perfect.

A pack is imperfect when it contains more or less than fifty-two cards, or a duplicate card.

Points. Each game consists of so many points, according as it is single, double, or treble: at the end of a rubber, the points

of the losing party are set off against those of the winners; the balance being the value or *points of the rubber.*

At long whist, the points vary from 1 to 5, as the games are single or double; one point being added for the rubber.

At short whist, the points vary from 1 to 8, as the games are single, double or treble; two points being added for the rubber.

Renounce, having none of the suit led.

Revokes are of two kinds: (1) not following suit when able; (2) not complying with a performable penalty. (*Vide Laws* 19, 30.)

Rubber, the majority of three games.

Ruff, trumping a renounce-suit.

See-saw, two parties ruffing alternate suits.

Sequence, two cards of a suit in succession.

Tierce, *quart*, *quint*, &c. sequence, of three, four, five, &c. cards respectively. *Tierce major*, ace king queen. *Quart* or *quint major*, ace to knave or ten inclusive.

Slam, winning every trick in the hand.

Tenace, the combination of best and third best of a suit.

Underplay, a deceptive game.

LAWS OF THE GAME.

1. THE first four persons arriving at the card-table are entitled to make the first rubber. Apart from this privilege, at the formation of a rubber, each candidate having drawn a card from the same pack, the lowest four are entitled to precedence; the remainder having the privilege of entering at the next table formed, or awaiting their turn at the first. FORMATION OF TABLE.

Six players constitute a full table.

After one rubber, the players "cut out;" the highest withdrawing, to make room for supernumeraries, only two of whom are admissible together. After the second rubber, the longest players withdraw by rotation.

A fresh candidate has a prior right to one who has played at another table.

2. In cutting, ace is lowest. The two lower become partners; the lowest, having the deal, chooses seats and cards. Should the two lower cards be identical in value, these cut again for the deal. No one having PARTNERS.

once chosen his seat, can change the same during the rubber. After each rubber, a fresh cut may be made for partners, or for deal only.

Spurious cards.

In cutting, should two or more cards be identical in value, so as to arrest the comparison between the higher and lower, such cards are passed over, and others drawn, until the elimination is complete.

Supposing a king, two queens, and nine are cut: the queens re-draw, for the lower to pair with the nine; which, as the absolute lowest in the original cut, takes the deal.

Similarly should three kings and a queen be drawn, the queen gains the deal, pairing with the lowest in the new cut; if a king and two knaves succeed, a further draw is necessitated as between the knaves, for the lower to pair with the original queen.

But if a tray and three deuces are drawn, the tray becomes the absolute highest; the deal falling to the lowest in the second cut: so that if two trays succeed, a further draw is requisite as between them, for the higher to pair with the original tray.

SHUFFLING.

3. The cards must be shuffled above the table. Each player may shuffle; the dealer having the final, and eldest hand the penultimate option.

It is unusual to be over-fastidious, the preparation of the dealer's pack being ordinarily intrusted to his left-hand adversary, and the alternate pack to the dealer's partner. No one is obliged to shuffle: nor can any one reclaim the privilege after relinquishment of his due turn.

NEW CARDS.

4. The cards may be changed as often as any player chooses to pay for new packs. One pack cannot be called separately.

5. To constitute a cut, either parcel must consist of four cards at least. THE CUT

Should any card be exposed in or before cutting, whether accidentally or otherwise, the pack must be cut anew.

After the cut has been intentionally accepted, the pack cannot be altered; the sanction of the cutter and dealer being conclusive: the dealer must, therefore, adhere to this cut, or resign his deal.

It follows, that new cards must be ordered before the cut.

6. If the dealer looks at the trump before the pack is dealt out, the adversaries have a right to see it likewise, with the option of a fresh cut. DEALING.

7. Any card, except the last, being faced, necessitates a fresh deal. Faced card.

8. Should a card be exposed in dealing, the party not in fault have the option, limited, however, to a player who has not looked at his cards, of demanding a fresh deal, before the trump is turned. Exposed card.

If, almost the last card having been exposed, the turn-up follow so rapidly as necessarily to forestall any decision, the opponents acquire the advantage of guiding their election by the trump (*Vide Law* 18).

If the deal stands, the exposed card cannot be called.

9. If the dealer drop the trump card on his parcel before exposing it, the deal is forfeited; but he may set it apart from the rest, while bets are being arranged. Lost deal.

EXPOSED CARDS.

16. *Carte vue, carte jouée.* Every card faced, improperly played, or exposed, may be required to be left on the table; and called, wherever it will not constitute a revoke; the call being renewable until satisfied. (*c*)

A player overlooking his neighbour's cards cannot call them, unless wilfully exposed; but a semi-detached card is within the penalty. A card falling to the ground is liable to be called, but should not purposely be looked at.

17. If more than one card be exposed in playing to a trick, the adversaries may decide which shall be played; and afterwards call the remainder. (*d*)

If the cards are not dropped simultaneously, one being distinctly played before any other is exposed, the after-exposure cannot be called to the current trick.

CALLING.

18. A penalty cannot be demanded in lieu of a card legitimately played; but in all cases of delinquency, reasonable time must be allowed for its exaction.

LEADING OUT OF TURN

19. If any one lead out of turn, either of the adversaries, as they may agree, but without further consultation, has the choice of calling the exposed card at any time; or a suit from the right player. (*e*)

Should the exposed card be legitimately played away before being called, no penalty remains.

If the delinquents have none of the suit called, the penalty is adeemed: if the opponents call different suits, either may be led.

PLURALITY OF LEADS.

20. If any one, having headed a trick, leads afresh, or, having won the trick, leads consecutively several

cards, without in each case awaiting his partner's play, the partner may be called on to win the trick originally headed, or any of the subsequent cards played by anticipation; in which event, each of the intercepted cards may be called.

Case 1. If A plays a succession of winning cards, without waiting for his partner, who is able to ruff, the latter must do so, if asked to intercept the lead.

Case 2. If A simply places his king-cards on the table to be called, does he equally compromise his partner? *Decision.* The complexion of the case would not be altered, the cards being in equity regarded as played.

Case 3. A, having only a long trump and long suit, plays the trump, and then his suit, in anticipation of the lead, which he declares to be immaterial to the issue. B claims to treat the hand as exposed, and calls one of the long suit to his lead. *Decision.* Claim disallowed; but had A any of the suit led, he would have committed a revoke.

21. When a mislead is followed by one or even two players, each of their cards may be called; but should the trick be completed it stands good, on the principle, *communis error facit jus.* (*f*) PLAYING OUT OF TURN.

22. If third hand plays before the second, so may the fourth; otherwise, if fourth hand anticipates his partner, the latter may be called on to pass or win the trick.

23. Should any one play twice to one trick, or pack the trump card with the tricks, he is liable for each re- MISPLAYING

voke made in consequence; the same as if he had dropped a card.

24. Should any one have omitted playing to a trick, the adversaries may claim a new deal.

TRUMP-CARD. 25. A player is entitled to know the trump-suit at any time; but not the trump-card, after the first trick is played. Should the trump have been prematurely taken in hand, and the dealer, on inquiry, substitute another, the latter may be called. Should he ignore it, he may be obliged to play his highest or lowest trump, at the first opportunity.

PLAYED CARDS. 26. No one can see more than the last trick turned, and the current trick; *i. e.* at most eight cards, of which only four have been turned.

PLACING CARDS. 27. Before the trick is gathered, you may require each card to be claimed; the proper formulary being, "Draw your cards." To ask who played any particular card, is too pointed. If you inquire your partner's card alone, the adversaries may take all the advantage of his misclaim.

Case. A having requested cards to be placed, his partner misappropriates the best; whereupon B abstains from drawing, and A passes the trick. *Decision.* A may recall his card.

In another case, B indistinctly named his card, instead of drawing it, and A passed the trick through misunderstanding him. Here again A's request was not properly met.

ABANDONED HAND. 28. When possession of a hand has once been *distinctly abandoned*, it cannot, even though unexposed, be

again taken up from the table, if the opponents decide on calling it.

A mere feint to surrender is not penal: the abandonment must be absolute.

Case 1. A having intimated that he has game, B (adversary) resigns, when it turns out that A was mistaken. Can B recall his hand? *Decision.* B should have called A's hand, instead of resigning his own. C and D proceed to call both hands respectively.

Case 2. A, B, and C, having thrown up their cards, can D call all *three* hands? *Decision.* His partner's hand can be called by the opponents. (*g*)

Case 3. A and B having thrown down their hands, are respectively permitted to retrieve them; but, after an interval of some tricks, A's partner claims to call B's hand. Condonation is pleaded. *Decision.* Plea allowed. (*h*)

29. There are two *criteria* for the establishment of a revoke; either the trick must have been quitted, or, the person revoking, or his partner, must have played since. REVOKE.

It is no confirmation of a revoke, that the trick is simply turned, unless absolutely *quitted;* which is not the case till the trick is turned, and the hand entirely withdrawn.

Case 1. A having renounced, B had turned the trick on five others, and gathered the six together; but while his hand is still on the parcel, A discovers he could follow suit. *Decision.* B's hand having never quitted the trick, A is in time to correct his card, if neither himself nor partner had since played.

Case 2. The trick being turned by the non-winners, A discovers, while claiming it, that he had revoked. *Decision.* The trick

not being *properly* quitted, the revoke can be rectified, in the absence of after-play.

Case 3. Can a revoke be rectified after the trick has been merely turned over, without being gathered up, the hand having been withdrawn? *Decision.* Not unless such trick was turned by the non-winners.

Case 4. Would a mislead be sufficient to support a revoke? *Decision.* Yes.

Mis-renounce.

30. On partner renouncing, he may be questioned on the point: and if he finds that he is in error, then, so long as no revoke has been consummated, he may withdraw the renounce; on penalty of substituting his highest or lowest of the current suit, or of having the false card subsequently called, as may be demanded: the after-players being at liberty to alter their cards.

The condition on which a renounce may be rectified, is not fulfilled by the sudden substitution of another card, before the penalty is settled. Such card, if it would not meet the adversaries' demand, is unwarrantably exposed.

Should the penalty be improperly evaded, *e. g.* by not playing the highest as called, the original fault remains unatoned; *i. e.* the revoke is complete.

Case 1. A having requested his partner to re-examine his hand, the trick is quitted in the mean time. Is the revoke established? *Decision.* Not unless the trick is quitted by A himself or his partner; the question having been put in time.

Case 2. A, having renounced, is, while in the act of playing again, admonished by his partner: when it became a question, whether the card *in transitu* was actually played, or only exposed. *Decision.* The card was played, so soon as it left the owner's hand.

31. No revoke can be claimed after the tricks have been mixed.

The proof of revoke rests on the claimants, who may examine all the tricks at the end of the hand. If the defendants mix the tricks to prevent discovery, the penalty may be taken *pro confesso*.

Penalty for revoke.

32. Each revoke incurs a separate penalty, taking precedence of every other score: each penalty may be differently taken; but a single penalty is not divisible. You may add three to your own, or substract three from the adverse score, or appropriate three of the adversaries' tricks. A party revoking cannot count game that hand.

There may be judgment in electing the penalty: *e. g.* if the opponents are four or two to love, add to your own score; if they are three to one, take them down; if they have seven tricks, take three of them.

When no point remains to be saved, the idea of requiring the hand to be played out, for the chance of the winners' revoking, is frivolous; because they would naturally offer their hands to be called.

Should the improbable case of both parties revoking occur, the penalty is mutually taken, neither counting game.

Bets on the odd trick are decided, in case of a revoke, by the result after the penalty is taken.

Case. If the revoking party are four, and three points are taken from their score, they cannot then count honours.

Scoring.

33. Honours can never be counted, unless claimed before the ensuing deal is completed. An omission to

score cannot be supplied, after an intervening score has become due. An overscore may always be taken down. (*k*)

Honours.

In scoring honours, it is sufficient that the question be mooted before the turning up. If the claim had been flatly negatived by the opponents, lapse of time is no estoppel.

Case. A having played three honours, at the score of three, intimates that the game is won; but B insists on persevering "to save a point;" and when the next game is completed, impeaches A's title to the game, on the ground that he had not properly called honours. *Decision.* The call was implied, and distinctly recognized by the adversary. The prematureness of the claim does not destroy its efficacy.

AT LONG WHIST.

CALLING OUT.

34. If any one calls after having played; or reminds his partner of calling, after the deal is completed; the adversaries may claim a fresh deal.

Case. A, being at eight, inquires of his partner immediately after the deal is completed, "How many are we?" *Decision.* He reminds him of calling.

Calling is the only positive avowal permitted at whist. It is an intimation to partner to lead trumps: hence, with a powerful hand it is not advisable to call, lest you put the adversaries on their guard; neither is it advisable, unless partner has the lead, to call before the latest period allowed, viz.: before your own turn to play.

When the adversaries do not call, if you have no honour, you may presume partner to have at least two; having one, you pre-

sume that he has at least another: if both parties are at eight, without calling, there is probably one honour in each hand.

If honours are not shown at the outset, precedence attaches to tricks.

35. If any one calls without having two honours; or without being at the score of eight; or shall answer the call, without having an honour; the adversaries may consult as to a fresh deal, reclaiming their hands if thrown down.

Case 1. A, on turning up an honour, calls to his partner, "Have you one?" May a fresh deal be demanded? *Decision.* Yes; unless it turns out that A, possessing another honour, had really a title to call.

Case 2. A, having four honours at the score of six, claims game. Can a fresh deal be demanded, for calling at another score than eight? *Decision.* This is not a *call*, the honours being treated as exposed cards.

BY-LAWS.

THE preceding code is framed with special reference to the laws of the Portland club; and is in accordance with the regulations of all the best whist-clubs of the present day. Other laws are conventionally admitted in some circles; but as their compulsory introduction cannot be entertained, I embody them in the form of by-laws, for the private adoption of those who consider them desirable.

INTIMATIONS 36. Whoever indicates the tenor of his hand by any overt declaration, must suffer it to be called.

37. Whoever indicates possession of any card or cards, must submit to such being called.

38. Whoever signifies approval or disapproval of partner's play; or induces him to play or withhold any particular card or suit; or separates his own card from the trick unasked; or offers any improper information; shall submit to a suit being called, either from himself or partner, on the first opportunity.

This provision comprehends all improprieties of speech and gesture, which are not elsewhere provided against: *e. g.*

Refreshing partner's memory as to the score, trump-card, a Blue Peter, king-card, or any other particular.

39. Honours scored without title shall be transferred to opponents. MIS-SCORE.

40. So long as two partners have their score differently marked, the opponents may elect which score shall be accepted.

41. Whoever revokes shall pay his partner's points for the rubber, notwithstanding the result was thereby unaffected. (*l*) REVOKING.

42. The uninvited interference of a bystander subjects the favoured party to forego the benefits pointed out. (*m*) BYSTANDER.

NOTES.

a. This law may seem, at first blush, severe: but the presumption is, that the card was not dropped in dealing, but by the defaulter; who might have purposely mixed it with the other pack. Card-laws, having reference to the possibility, not the probability, of malpractices, admit no distinction between intentional and non-intentional acts.

b. Many hands have been unconsciously played with an imperfect pack.

c. Hoyle enacted that an exposed card should be named, as a condition precedent to its being called: and provided a penalty, which would now be superfluous, for miscalling. The modern law is based on the possibility of the card having been seen by the partner.

d. There is no ground for considering this proceeding as exacting a plurality of penalties.

e. The limitation in calling a suit only from *the right player*, creates this anomaly in the penalty: that in case of leading in turn of the partner, either a suit or the exposed card may be called; but for the graver offence of attempting the adversaries' lead, no choice can exist.

f. This is a moot law: some players averring the doctrine, that the fault of A, in misleading, excuses B in following him. But though it may be natural for B or C to follow a mislead, it certainly is not obligatory; consequently their cards cannot be otherwise than unnecessarily exposed. The offence of A, in disclosing his suit, is plainly greater than that of B; who simply

exposes a card, perhaps contrary to inclination: but the penalty is exactly adapted to meet the difference; inasmuch as either a suit, or the exposed card, can be called from the one party; but only the card from the other. The plea that B is justified by the error of A, is against the analogy in law 28, *Case* 1. Moreover, the special proviso for correcting after-play in case of a misrenounce, seems purposely to exclude the principle from operating under any less excuse. Supposing also that the proper lead was either with B or C, surely neither of them could plead their own default.

g. I do not understand the principle of this decision; considering that a player abandoning his cards has no further power than a bystander over his hand: so that if both partners, A and C, following the example of B, abandon their cards, it should be open to D to make any possible disposition of the hand. As the decision stands, two partners might, in a desperate case, purposely lay down their hands, in hope of an adversary doing the same, and of then saving the game by calling.

h. This is an instance of the bad consequence of not playing the strict game. In the case stated, A's partner did not seek to call B's hand, until A had evidently played all his important cards.

k. It is right that honours should not be mooted, after the period for playing the next hand has arrived: *i. e.* after the completion of the ensuing deal. But the ground for allowing a wider margin for tricks, because the score is presumed to have been duly ascertained, is unsatisfactory.

l. The latter clause of this law operates against an intentional revoke (*Vide* page 68).

m. The office of bystander is voluntary; his silence imperative. The idea of holding an intermeddler accountable, may be equitable enough, but its practicability is by no means certain.

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS.

Est quâdam prodire tenus.

GRADATIONS OF PLAY.

1. The novice should play his hand in a straightforward manner, finessing but slightly, and never misleading his partner; his system should rather be to save than to win the game. He must play a *good* game before attempting a *fine* one; that is, he must pursue the safest leads and most simple finesses, without indulging in capricious experiments, or venturing into the labyrinths of underplay. After some experience, he will gradually improve his tactics, adapting them to the infinite modifications which arise in the course of play; and will not scruple to occasionally abandon the beaten track, when he may win the game by a bold and unsuspected deviation. Such refinements cannot be taught by rote, being mostly extempore stratagems, effected by the genius of the accomplished tactician.

RUDIMENTS.

2. Habitual observance of the following principles

involves much recompense for little labour. They are nevertheless grievously neglected by beginners.

a. Always consult the scores before playing. Score.

b. Bear in memory the trump-card: it may often explain the lead; and by withholding it as late as practicable, you add somewhat to the information of your partner. Trump card.

c. Never hesitate long, nor half draw out different cards: this is disadvantageous to yourself, and tiresome to all. Hesitation.

d. Never play false or random cards. Beware also of forming a system upon fortuitous results; as bad play may chance to succeed where good would not; and it will ever be more difficult to displace erroneous impressions than to acquire just ones at first; on this account, avoid beginning to practise with indifferent players. Random shots.

It is maintained that the odds are only *five per cent.* between the best and worst partners. If this be true, it is well worth while to seek improvement at so small a sacrifice. *Le jeu vaut la chandelle.*

e. Having calculated the probable worth of your hand, *keep your eye on the board*, instead of poring over your own cards; so that by strictly noting the value of each trick, you may regulate your judgment as to the position of the remaining cards, and contents of the several hands. This is the only method of *cultivating* Analysis of tricks.

the memory, without which, neither maxims nor practice can make even a mediocre player.

Indifferent players are fond of ascribing their failings to a physical unsoundness of memory; whereas the superior facility with which proficients draw their conclusions, is the result of habitual practice based on a thorough knowledge of the game: quickness of memory should therefore be considered as the effect rather than the cause of good play.

Aids to memory.

f. The habit of counting your suits, and observing the best of each as you sort them, so far assists the memory, as to enable you, by reverting to the original complement, to recall at least the number of rounds in each suit. Mnemonical systems of placing the cards are worthless: they may fail at a pinch, or be detected.

INFERENCES.

3. In the following inferences there is little room for ambiguity; unless false colours are purposely shown to deceive the adversaries.

Blue Peter.

a. Whenever a superior card is *unnecessarily* played before an inferior, *e. g.* the tray before deuce, it is the strongest indication of the player wishing for trumps.

This signal, metaphorically termed *the Blue Peter*, is in diametrical antagonism to the theory of the old school; when, playing the higher card first, indicated exhaustion of the suit and a wish to ruff.

Sequence.

b. It being an axiom to lead the highest of a sequence, but to follow suit with the lowest (41), except when asking for trumps; it follows—

i. That the player who leads off a high card, probably holds the next inferior in value.

Seeing otherwise by your own hand, you know that he led to benefit his partner, or to obtain a ruff.

ii. That a player does not hold the next inferior card to that with which he follows suit.

The maxim of playing highest third-hand is an instance of the mischievous effects of 'general rules for beginners:' sequences and finesses are ever to be expected; and these exceptions are more important than the rule.

c. Leading from only two in suit, with or without sequence, indicates a wish to ruff; especially if the higher card be played first, as is proper (25). Ruff-lead.

d. Leading the king-trump, and then stopping, is generally a sign of exhaustion; and invariably after a ruff. King-trump.

e. A player usually discards from a suit that he does not care to be led; *i. e.* either from his own weakest, or partner's strongest; taking care to preserve a remnant of the latter, to lead, if eventually required. Having two weak suits, he should discard alternately from each. Discard.

Observe carefully the *original* discard, and the aspect of the game at the time. To partner's lead, let the discard be as straightforward and directive as possible; to opponent's, you need be less courteous.

In neither case, however, should the discard be unconditionally accepted, to the sacrifice of all other considerations: as,

on the one hand, partner may be reluctant to wholly unguard his weakest suit; while on the opponent's side, the discard may be purposely deceptive.

f. Discarding a higher card before a lower, is of course a Blue Peter. Discarding ace, or king-card, indicates that the sequence cards are behind: discarding second best, indicates having no more.

Sequence in fourth hand.

g. The fourth hand is presumed to win at the cheapest rate; if therefore he wins the ten with ace, he has probably nothing intermediate; if, however, he returns the king *instanter*, he should have no more of the suit; and had he played queen immediately after the ace, it is equally clear that he holds the king.

By winning with highest, and returning lowest of sequence, you inform partner of your strength; which is eminently desirable in his own leads, especially if trumps.

FINESSE AND TENACE.

4. *Finessing* is when you endeavour to win the trick, either by passing partner's card, or without parting with your best; so that, if the intervening card or cards be on your right, you win at comparatively slight expense.

Tenace is the best and third best of a suit; which combination, in the possession of fourth hand, involves the certainty of two tricks: whereas, in the case of second or third, this effect is only contingent.

Both are thus exemplified: the second or third hand, holding ace queen ten, *finesses* queen, in hope of the intervening king lying on the right: at the same

time, should the queen be taken, he is left with ace ten, against the knave; so that, on return of the suit, he will either *establish the tenace*, or command a second finesse with the ten.

The economy effected by the sister instruments of finesse and tenace is so great, that the chance of establishing or defeating these positions should be a ruling object throughout the hand; unflagging observation being requisite to extend the principle into the dregs of a suit. Nor is it less important to keep in view the correlative combination of second and fourth best, or *minor-tenace*, standing, as it were, in the position of heir to the pure tenace. Minor tenace

5. Although the rationale of the game is characterized rather by intellectual skill than fortuitous elements, yet, in the absence of more positive *indicia* springing from the play, a knowledge of certain abstract computations will be useful. MATHEMATICAL DATA

i. It is 2 to 1 against partner holding a given card which you have not. as to a given card.

ii. It is 32 to 25 (about 5 to 4) that he holds one or both of any two cards.

iii. It is 5 to 2 that he holds one or two or all of any three cards.

iv. It is 4 to 1 that he holds one out of any four cards.

v. It is 7 to 2 against his holding two only of any three cards; and 3 to 2 against two out of any four cards.

The odds are so considerable (17 to 2) that no player has any two named cards, that it would be preposterous to play on such a contingency, except as a *dernier ressort* (*e. g.* 93); deeper calculations, therefore, are more for curiosity than use.

Lead *v.* deal. In playing for the odd trick, the advantage is supposed to lie with the lead (particularly with dumby); the dealer, on the other part, has a better prospect of honours; and, at short whist, the odds at commencement, are 5 to 4 on the deal for the game, and 6 to 5 for the rubber.

OUTLINE OF CAMPAIGN. 6. The primary object at starting should be to establish a long suit, whether your own or partner's. This is scarcely feasible without superiority in trumps: the strength of which must invariably, more or less regulate the play. *Generally*, the primitive lead is from the strongest or most numerous suit, especially if containing an honour. Should partner win, he may be expected to show his best suit in return: after which it becomes mutually optional, either to pursue one's own suit, or to return partner's, or to open trumps; which last proceeding would be a strong indication of a powerful hand. *When rather weak*, the better policy is to lead strengthening cards, as boding least mischief to partner; and to clear the original suits before touching trumps, so as to make the utmost tricks in a direct and certain manner, without allowing king-cards to be ruffed; and, above all, never risking a trick, by which the saving of the game is effected.

Queens, knaves, tens, are strengthening cards: the nine is equivocal, being led both from a good and bad suit (61).

7. *At commencement* of a game, a powerful hand is entitled to play boldly. *If the score is considerably adverse*, a shallow or even moderate hand should be sacrificed to strengthen partner; in which case avoid leading from several low cards; and where you have less than four in suit, lead fearlessly the most strengthening card, whether king, queen, or knave: for if partner is weak also, the game must be lost, while if strong you place him on his guard, and afford opportunities of finessing to most advantage. You might equally lead your best trump, particularly if you have no honour and the adversaries are three. *When the scores are pretty equal*, play more cautiously: and at all times avoid capriciously shifting from one weak suit to another. Influence of scores on play.

8. Leads are of three kinds,—

i. *Natural or aggressive*, which proceed from well-fortified suits. Diagnosis of leads.

ii. *Secondary or forced.* These are especially dependent on some known position, or unexpected fall, of the cards; provoking an involuntary change of suit, or perhaps inviting the return of an adverse lead.

iii. *Defensive*, emanating from sheer weakness; *i. e.* from a poor suit of less than four cards, of which the highest should invariably be led. This, if an honour, may materially assist the partner; who must never re-

turn the suit, unless for the purpose of establishing a ruff.

Return of partner's lead.

9. It will be seen (29) that it may be of paramount import to return *instanter* partner's lead in trumps: in other suits, if you have a good independent lead, this is not judicious, particularly when you only win with queen; for by opening a counter-suit, you afford a clue to partner, whereby he may direct his future leads. Here is a sad stumbling-block to beginners, who are tutored "always to return partner's lead," which rule, if properly interpreted, only means, "return partner's (aggressive) lead, to the exclusion of the adversary's." So far is there no injunction from making a collateral lead of your own, that the omission to do so is only attributable to either of these motives—that you have nothing better to return, or that you purpose establishing a ruff. Nevertheless, it would be dangerous to lay down a precise boundary in this respect, as the exact line of demarcation will only be drawn by a proficient. It may be enough to hint that *generally* an aggressive lead may freely be returned; while a forced or defensive lead should be treated as the suit of the adversary, in which the tenace and command should be jealously retained.

Demonstration of hand

10. Let your general play be as intelligible to a *good* partner as you can make it; for though you may thereby offer equal information to the opponents, the

advantage is usually more available to him. False cards and speculative manœuvres tend to destroy that confidence and correspondence between partners, which constitute the essence of success.

Nevertheless it is the part of a proficient to vary his game at the *proper* season, and subject to the calibre of the players. Accordingly, if partner is unlikely to win any trick, or you are indifferent as to what he may lead; an obscure game, particularly in adverse suits, may be useful: *e. g.* the mode of playing sequences may be reversed; deeper finesses made; king-cards reserved, and false ones discarded. At other times, the disadvantage entailed by misleading partner, is not counterbalanced by placing opponents in the same boat: all hands will then be pulling against you.

THE LEAD.

C'est le premier pas qui coûte.

AGGRESSIVE LEADS.

11. ALWAYS lead the highest or lowest of a suit; never a central or intermediate card, without a peculiar object in so doing.

Elimination of finesse or tenace.

The most favourable leads are those which pave the way to a finesse or tenace; hence,

Ace king knave.

a. With ace king knave, lead king, and wait.

But observe that with ace king knave five in suit, the chances are in favour of the queen falling in the first two rounds.

By the expressions ace king knave five in suit, ace four in suit, king three in suit, is meant respectively, ace king knave with two others, ace with three others, king with two others.

King queen ten.

b. With king queen ten, lead king; and whether it wins or not, wait to see if ace or knave be forthcoming from partner (15, 66).

Queen knave nine.

c. With queen knave nine, lead queen; and if taken, wait for partner's rejoinder; except, perhaps, when you have five in suit, in which case the king-card and ten will probably fall together.

d. On same principle avoid leading from ace knave, or ten; as by remaining quiet you are more likely to acquire tenace. *Ace knave or ten.* (ineligible.)

An adept will discover numerous opportunities of following this principle throughout the hand (*e. g.* 36). The propriety of adopting or declining the proffered finesse depends upon adventitious causes; such as the quality of the return-card, the nature of the scores, the number of your suit; *e. g.* should you lead from ace knave, and partner win with queen, it would be absurd to finesse on return of the suit, when the king cannot be on your right.

12. When a suit is discontinued in order to be led up to, the best chance of defeating the ulterior object will be to lead through the discontinuing hand—E. G. (Counter-plot)

In the above case (*a*), king having been led on your left, and the suit discontinued, by leading through the ace knave, you may prevent the finesse.

Again, in case (*c*), seeing that, queen having failed, the suit is not repeated, by leading through the original player, you give partner the chance of making the ten over the nine.

This manœuvre is underplay if you yourself possess the king-card (69); but anywise it relieves partner from the danger of leading up to minor-tenace.

13. Sequences, heading a suit, are always safe and eligible leads. Holding a quart or quint to king, lead the lowest, to prevent partner from keeping up the ace, and hereafter obstructing your suit, while you proceed Sequence.

with a second round if it is kept up by the opponents: in all other cases lead the highest.

The use of leading the highest of a sequence is manifest: if with a tierce to queen you lead queen, second hand may put on king, and partner cap it with ace; whereas, had the ten been led, the ace would still be played, but the king withheld, instead of being hemmed in beyond escape.

Again, with tierce to knave, if second hand simply holds queen, &c., he would cover the knave led (50), and it is probable that partner plays higher (5 i.): whereas, if the nine is led, the queen is reserved.

Tierce major.

14. With tierce major, if you lead off king and queen, partner will know you have the ace, while the opponents are uncertain. Moreover, should partner have but one at most of the suit, he may be enabled to better regulate his discard.

King queen &c.

15. If you win with king, from king queen, &c., you must not depend upon being equally successful with the queen; discontinue the suit that the ace may be played (11 *b*, 66).

Queen knave.

16. From queen knave and another, lead queen, and if taken, abandon the suit; since you cannot play as before from a sequence: with more than one other, you may either lead queen and proceed with lowest, or begin with lowest and proceed with queen.

17. It may be gathered from the preceding rules (13 to 16), that with a tierce you may lead two rounds; but with only two cards in sequence it is best to allow

the second round, if unfavourable, to come from partner; (Sequence discontinued by A, to be supported by partner.) excepting only when the second card of the sequence is unguarded, in which case it should be played *instanter*, lest it clash with partner's king-card.

18. Leading ace and then a low one, indicates either numerical strength, or positive exhaustion: in the former case, you may establish a ruff for partner; in the latter, for yourself. In general, with ace and several small ones, it is best to remain quiet; playing ace can make but one trick, whereas its reservation may protect partner's hand, if not your own. Moreover, should you be left with long-trump and ace five of an entire suit, by passing the first two rounds, you probably make three tricks therein. Ace and low ones.

19. With ace king six in suit, insure two rounds; begin with king, for if partner has none, he gains the advantage of calculating for a double discard; and if the ace were ruffed at the outset, he could not give you so much credit for the king; morever, second hand would be less eager to ruff the king than the ace. Ace king six in suit.

20. With ace king five in suit, and strength in trumps, you might, if requiring three tricks in the suit, lead lowest; or king first, and then lowest, particularly if partner drops knave; but if weak in trumps, change the suit on the knave falling, and await the result of partner's hand. Ace king five in suit.

21. With king knave and more than one other, King, knave, &c.

Queen, &c. or with queen and more than two others, lead smallest.

It is better to lead from king or queen, if tolerably supported, than from ace: the opponents will lead the suits you avoid, and the ace will be most formidable when employed defensively. Strong cards take care of themselves; scheme to protect the weak.

Ace queen knave. 22. From ace queen knave, lead ace queen; if partner has king, he should play it on the queen, so as not to intercept the command; and should this be your primitive lead, he should forthwith play trumps (the best, if weak, 28, iii).

INELIGIBLE LEADS. Ace queen or knave. 23. Do not voluntarily lead from ace queen (or ace knave, 11 *d*), unless with five in suit: either alternative, however, is infinitely preferable to opening a weak suit.

It is better to relax your own than to strengthen the adversaries' point. Mediocre players, who never part with a tenace or certain trick, though for the chance of several, are like fencers who parry well, but cannot attack.

Three suit, or several low cards. 24. It is bad to lead from several small cards, at least, without strength in trumps; or from only three of a suit without ace or sequence: E. G. with ace knave (or ten) and one other, or with king knave and one other, if the lead emanates elsewhere, there is a good prospect of two tricks; but without waiting, there is little chance of more than one. King queen and one

other, is within the same category, notwithstanding the sequence. (*See also* 43.)

If such a lead is inevitable, commence with highest, or otherwise as advised *supra* (7).

Two ragged cards.

25. If you lead from only two in suit, commence with the highest under any circumstances; except, perhaps, at the very close of the hand. If you are not predisposed to ruff, it is best to avoid the suit altogether (*Comp.* 3 *c*).

Single card.

26. To lead, *at the outset*, a single *loose* card for the chance of ruffing is, at best, a dangerous experiment. The opponents, if strong, will at once suspect the motive, and play trumps; whereas by quietly awaiting the course of play, you excite no suspicion, and probably win a more costly trick; perhaps, too, leaving the command with partner. Admitting the probability of partner holding a finesse, or some strength in your blank suit, there is no reason for risking the sacrifice of his hand. Moreover, you are liable to misconstruction, for should partner be strong in other suits, he may give you credit for strength rather than weakness in this, and after playing out trumps, eventually return the lead to your mutual discomfiture.

With more than five trumps, it may be well to lead a single card; with five only, you might be playing the adversaries' game (81). If weak in trumps, the best

apology for leading a single card is when playing for the odd trick, with a prospective tenace.

It must be remembered that these precepts apply only to a primary lead, and a loose card. A single *strengthening* card is unexceptionable, providing always you are prepared to ruff, if called upon.

King.

27. A single king should never be led: by waiting, the chance is in favour of its making, even with ace against you; this too, without exposing your weakness, or danger of misconstruction.

TRUMPS.

Bis dat qui citò dat.

28. To the uninitiated the management of trumps is so much the more perplexing, inasmuch as any error in this suit is generally attended with worse consequences than in any other. *L'âme du jeu.*

The artificial system of asking for trumps is now so generally understood as emanating from great strength, with at least one honour, that it seems superfluous to suggest, that the signal should in most cases be answered with your *best* trump. Data for leading.

In the absence of a 'Blue Peter,' the rule with many good players is, never to lead trumps with a bad hand. But it often happens, in the first place, that partner may wish for trumps, without being warranted in making a special request; and, secondly, that he has no opportunity of so doing. With due deference to this section of players, I prefer the more general doctrine, that there are three special motives for leading trumps early, irrespective of any intimation from the

partner; two of these being direct or offensive motives, the third indirect or defensive; upon which distinction the return of the lead is wholly dependent (*Comp.* 8, 9).

The offensive leads (*to be returned*) are—

i. When you have great strength, unaccompanied perhaps by any other strong suit.

In this case you lead solely to disarm the enemy (30).

ii. When you want to establish a long suit.

In this case you must have at least four trumps (32).

The defensive lead (*not to be returned*) is—

iii. When you lead to strengthen partner.

This lead, which it is well to avoid altogether after partner has abstained from asking for trumps, should always commence with the highest (7, 38).

Theory of returning lead.

29. The peculiar feature in this department is the necessity of returning *instanter* the aggressive leads. Since the object in leading trumps aggressively is not the bare achievement of the utmost tricks in this individual suit, but the subsequent establishment of plain suits, after the opponents have been disabled from ruffing; you may presume, whenever partner is eager for trumps, that he wishes them to be cleared forthwith; whence the simple reason for returning this lead with the utmost punctiliousness.

There may, however, be qualifying circumstances in the nature of the card led, and the trump card: for should partner

have led an equivocal card, and you hold only king queen and another; it would be highly imprudent, if, having won with queen, you were to return the suit, at the cost of unguarding the king; when partner may simply have made a defensive lead.

Five or six trumps.

30. With five trumps it is a general rule to extract two rounds; with six it is imperative: you thus disable opponents from intercepting the favourable suits, and remain with sufficient power to ruff the unfavourable. Under any circumstances, if it be desirable to insure two rounds, play the ace if you have it.

With only four trumps originally, after two rounds, it is ordinarily 5 to 2 that partner holds one of the remainder (5, iii.).

Stress on third trick in a back-game.

31. As the ulterior object in other suits is the mainspring, by which the conduct of trumps is regulated, and consequently the third round is the most essential to be won, a greater degree of latitude and underplay is admissible in this department, than would be compatible with plain suits, wherein a third round may be ruffed: accordingly, on the principle of securing the third round, with king queen and but one or two others, you need not, as in ordinary suits, lead king, but rather the lowest: many players even prefer leading smallest from king queen five trumps; but in most cases it is better to lead king, and then lowest, submitting to the contingency of ace being kept up by the opponents.

Long suit with few trumps.

32. Supposing you want to establish a long suit, of which you have the perfect command, with only four

trumps, underplay is usually requisite: E. G. you may permit the first two tricks in trumps to be won by sufferance, so long as by reserving the ace or king-card, you secure possession of the third round (70); after which it is improbable that more than one trump remains against you; while you have the other trump, and a commanding lead; the adverse trump, if the best, will be forced out by your winning suit, which will then be re-established by your long trump. Nothing but five or six trumps collectively can prevent a long suit being thus established; and even supposing five trumps to be in one hand, this may still be effected, if you have the king-card of opponent's suit in reserve; for this now becomes as valuable as a long-trump in retrieving the lead.

33. In this back-game is seen the policy of this general maxim—Keep in reserve so late as you can the command of opponent's suits, and take care to leave partner's long suit as unfettered as possible.

Young players invariably act on the reverse of this, and even adepts require all their judgment to steer the exact course.

34. By good management you may possibly establish a *commanding* suit with four trumps headed only by the ten; neither be forced, nor overruff; one trump being expended strengthens your hand, leaving the contingency of partner gaining tenace in the next round. Nevertheless, when the superiority in trumps

is clearly against you, retreat with a good grace, realising, Parthian-like, what tricks you can readily, instead of affecting a deep game with a shallow hand. As a matter of course, if a trustworthy partner forces you prepensely, adopt his game without scruple; give him credit for the desired reinforcement in trumps.

If partner leads a winning card, he may not intend you to overruff; wherefore pursue your own game: if he plays a loose card, the only doubt can be whether he is simply trying to liberate his suit.

35. It is obvious, that without *the perfect control* of the long suit, the above manœuvring will be futile; as so far from forcing out the king-trump, you will more probably lose your own: hence the rule—With a powerful hand play trumps before disclosing your suit; but with only four trumps lead them not, until your suit is sufficiently cleared to insure you the future command; always remembering that with a good tierce, it is best to extract two rounds consecutively (17). Stipulation as to the command of suit.

To exemplify this rule—A holds king knave nine seven of hearts (trumps), quint to king in clubs, ace king of both other suits: B, second hand, has ace queen ten eight of trumps, and seven spades headed by quart to queen: C, third hand, has the remaining spades: and D the remaining trumps. *Vide Frontispiece.* Here, if A leads a trump, he loses *five by tricks.*

36. It may be advantageous to lead up to the ace; with a good sequence for instance, or numerical Leading up to honour.

strength; less so up to king; and disadvantageous to queen or knave.

But if you hold ace queen ten, when knave is turned up on your right, you may lead queen and wait.

Leading through honour.

37. The doctrine of leading through an honour has become effete, since the introduction of the Blue Peter enables the partner to signal for trumps, without the necessity of leading up to the enemy.

It is generally right to lead knave through the queen: as it has little chance of making a trick in that position, but offers a good finesse for partner.

It does not follow, that with only queen and another, you should lead through the king; as the queen may be a very protective card.

Policy of strengthening partner.

38. If opponents are three, and your own score very low, it is right to lead your best trump, particularly having no honour; as unless partner has two honours, the game must be lost (7). It is perhaps more important to show a good partner your weakness than your strength in trumps: in the one case, he will keep his own suits entire, discarding from the adversaries'; in the other, he will discard his own, keeping guard over the adversaries'.

Exceptional case.

39. Many players object to leading trumps when trying for the odd trick.

SECOND HAND.

Similes similibus facillime congregantur.

40. The maxims for second hand are nearly reducible to playing lowest of suit or lowest of sequence; continually keeping in view the economy of finesse or tenace: hence, CHARACTERISTICS. Finesse and tenace.

a. With ace king knave, play ace or king; but do not finesse in the second round, if the original leader betrays poverty (3 *c*). *Ace king knave.*

b. With king queen ten, or queen knave nine, play queen or knave respectively; and so on. *King queen ten. Queen knave nine.*

c. With ace queen ten, play queen; unless requiring three tricks in the suit, when you may substitute the ten. *Ace queen ten.*

41. The play of second hand, in regard to sequences, is so far analogous to that of the eldest, that wherever you would open a sequence as leader, you may equally break it second hand: the difference being, that you lead the highest, but follow suit with the lowest: E. G. Sequence

Queen knave &c. as from queen knave three in suit, you would lead queen, so being second hand, you should put on knave: as on the other hand with queen knave four in suit, you might lead smallest in preference to queen (16), so being second hand you may play lowest, instead of disturbing the sequence. Again, as with king queen and but one or two other *trumps*, you might lead smallest (31), so, being second hand, you may play lowest, in preference to parting the sequence.

King queen &c. in trumps.

The utility of leading the highest of sequence has been shown *supra* (13). The advantage of putting on the lowest is equally palpable; for by playing queen from king queen, second or third hand shows partner—

a. That he does not hold the knave.

b. That the king is not on his left (3 *b*).

Ace king &c. 42. With ace king &c. it is imprudent to risk either first or second round; it being seldom right, except with a strong game or finesse, to keep up the king-card in the second round of a plain suit; for though partner might win with a minor card, the third round is likely to be ruffed; so that if thwarted, and the ruffing trump could not otherwise have been turned to account, you lose both tricks.

Second best guarded. 43. Sometimes, nevertheless, the original leader withholds the king-card, repeating the lead with a small one; so that with only second best and another remaining, your best plan is to produce the former at

once, E. G. Supposing you had led from king three in suit, and fourth hand, having won cheaply, returns the suit, your best chance of making the king is to put it on; otherwise third hand might finesse.

It may be observed, however, that bad players seldom finesse when they ought, particularly in a second round. The above is another instance of the danger in leading from only three in suit (24).

Motives for playing ace.

44. When second hand plays ace to the first lead, he must either have several or no more of the suit (*Comp.* 18): if, however, he immediately plays trumps, it merely betrays impatience to extract them, regardless of expense.

Ace queen &c.

45. With ace queen &c. play lowest, unless with five in suit: with ace queen ten, the case is different (40 *c*).

Ace knave ten.

46. With ace knave ten, if trumps, put on the ten; in other suits the lowest: because in trumps, the lead may be both from king and queen; in plain suits, from but one of these; when playing the ten would be fruitlessly impairing a strong suit.

Honour led *Queen.*

47. Do not rashly put king on queen; but presuming the lead to be from the usual queen knave &c. reserve the king for the knave; as, if the ten is on your side, the adversaries will at least lose the command after the second round, to say nothing of the chance of partner holding ace; whereas, if ace ten are both against you, no trick can be made anywise.

Assuming the queen to be led from quart to queen, if you hold king five in suit, it is an equal chance that the ace is single.

48. Similarly with ace ten &c. pass the queen; as if partner has king, you probably gain three tricks.

If queen wins, you will not of course finesse in second round.

Knave. 49. Do not put ace on knave, unless holding queen also: in which case the king cannot lie on your right, except at the very close of the hand.

Some players demur to passing the knave, lest the second round should be ruffed; but assuming the greater probability that the second round does not fail; if third hand is left with king, he will be more likely to eventually establish the ruff; whereas, if knave were passed, partner may win with queen, and the second round falling to the ace, nothing remains to be trumped.

(Summary.) 50. With above limitations (47 to 49), having less than four in suit, put honour upon honour: though with a fair expectation of establishing a long suit, an honour may always be passed.

Ten &c. 51. With only ten and two others, by heading the second round, you may save partner's hand; particularly if the third hand has already expended an honour.

King guarded. 52. With king and another; if the knave, put it on; if a loose card, it is sometimes right to put on king, and sometimes not; a previous determination prevents the betrayal of the hand by hesitation: the chances being originally 2 to 1 against third hand having ace

(5, i.), it is generally proper to play the king, particularly if you want the lead. On the other hand, a good player is not over-partial to leading from ace (21). I. turned up, the king should invariably be played.

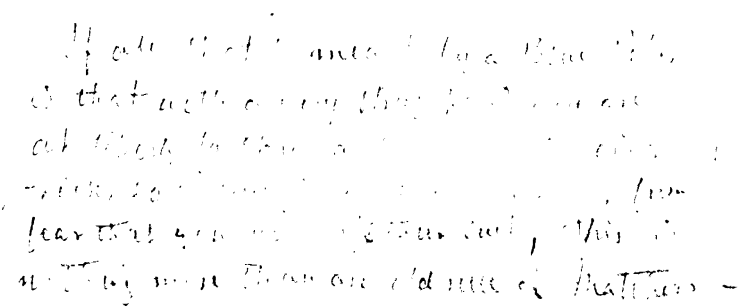
Queen guarded.

53. With queen and another, play the latter: for the chances are 5 to 4 against queen winning (5, ii.), while you have at least the chance of making it over a finesse in the second round, without exposing your barrenness. If a superior honour is turned up on the right, or by partner; the queen should certainly be played.

The adage, "king ever, queen never," should be interpreted, "king often, queen seldom."

Knave guarded.

54. With knave and another, playing knave would generally be taken for a Blue Peter.



THIRD HAND.

Ne quid nimis.

55. We now come to the subject of finessing; an attribute possessed in common by the second and third hand, though more generally ascribed to the latter.

THEORY OF FINESSING.

The position of the game will commonly determine the propriety of finessing; for there is no positive finesse which circumstances may not render indefensible. In the first deal, there is scarcely any which is unjustifiable, when the failure leaves you at three instead of four; on the other hand, no finesse is justifiable, on which depends scoring two or four, where there might be a certainty of three.

Finessing is more or less judicious, according as the advantage accruing from success will be to the disadvantage entailed by miscarriage: when, therefore, the risking one trick might be fatal, there is not the shadow of excuse for finessing. To save game must always be the paramount consideration; sometimes, on the other hand, this cannot be done except by a successful finesse (*e. g.* 94).

56. No finesse can be more *à propos* than with minor-tenace in the *second round* of a suit, *e. g.* queen ten against king knave &c. for if second hand plays a loose card, you may conclude, except now and then in trumps, that he does not hold the best (*Vide* 32, 42); wherefore you can hardly suffer by finessing the ten. *Beau ideal of finesse.*

57. Hence, if third hand wins partner's lead by finessing queen, he must play the ace before returning another, to prevent partner from finessing; not to mention the impropriety of keeping back the command of his suit. *Ace queen.*

It is not essential that the ace be returned *instanter*, but merely that it have precedence in that suit.

58. The finesse with ace queen is perhaps the most ordinary that occurs; insomuch that if third hand plays ace in the first round, he must expect little credit for the queen. It is seldom requisite to finesse against more than one intervening card; though in trumps, deep finessing, or rather passing a trick, may be very effective.

It is erroneous to suppose that the third hand has *at all times* an equal chance of succeeding in a finesse against but one intervening card: for after the second hand has played, the fourth hand is then holding one card above him; which preponderance, increasing with the progress of the hand, must be taken into account. Moreover, there is always a chance of the intervening card being unguarded; so that you give rather more chance than you receive by finessing.

E. G. Remaining with queen ten against knave nine and another; if partner leads the lowest, and second hand plays the nine, the chances on fourth hand holding the knave against the second are, with only four tricks played, 9 to 8; with nine tricks, 4 to 3; with ten tricks, 3 to 2; with eleven tricks, 2 to 1.

Partner's card. *Queen.*

59. One mode of finessing is, trusting the trick to a strengthening card of the partner. Under no circumstances put ace on his queen; for if the king does come in, this is better than parting with both ace and queen for one trick, and leaving the command against you.

Knave or ten.

60. Again, if partner leads knave, and you have ace ten; by passing his card, you will subsequently have a favorable finesse with the ten, this hardly coming within the injunction against holding up the king-card in the second round (42).

Similarly, if partner leads ten, and you have ace knave, pass the ten.

Nine.

61. You might even pass partner's nine, especially in trumps, for if he has no honour, you can make but one trick anywise; if he has an honour, you may thus make two.

Good players seldom lead a nine or ten, unless—

i. From sequence to king (13).

ii. From king knave ten nine.

iii. When heading a suit of less than four cards (8, iii.).

If knave or king is in your own hand, you conclude it is for the last reason.

62. With ace queen ten, it would be impolitic to finesse ten in the first round, in preference to queen. Ace queen ten.

63. With queen ten &c. it would be very improper to finesse in the first round, though it may be extremely *à propos* in the second (56). Queen ten.

64. With king knave four in suit, finesse knave and return lowest; with three in suit, and *à fortiori* with king knave only, to a primary lead, play king and return knave; to a subordinate lead, it is safer to finesse without returning it. King knave.

65. With less than four originally of partner's *aggressive* lead, there is rarely any profit in finessing; in any event, the next highest should generally be returned. Weak suit.

This answers two purposes: demonstrating your own poverty, and transferring the finesse to partner. Bad players prefer finessing themselves to allowing partner to do so, even in his own suit; and returning a loose card, weaken their fellow-combatant, when they ought to strengthen him.

FOURTH HAND.

Bis imperat qui sibi imperat.

Ace knave &c.

66. If king is led, and you hold ace knave &c. by permitting king to win, you insure two tricks if the suit is pursued: if, on the other hand, the suit is discontinued (*Vide* 15), the position of the knave is not improved, and ultimately the ace may be ruffed.

In the case of second hand, the knave requires no extraneous protection, the queen being clearly on the right: consequently the king should be taken at once; providing that you would not be obliged to play back to the queen, and also that you do not care for the immediate command. The principle, in both cases, is simply to consider, whether you would rather take possession of the ensuing lead, or leave it with the adversaries.

Leading up to weak hand.

67. Having won a trick very cheaply, it may not be amiss to return the opponent's suit; but this must very rarely be done in trumps, nor upon too light grounds: for the apparent weakness may be a mere decoy, under which a strong game or tenace is concealed, in anticipation of the return. Never, therefore,

be surprised in this ambuscade, in trumps: to say the least, you play the adversary's game by extracting them.

68. In plain suits, if strong yourself, there is less room for suspicion; accordingly, by playing through the original hand, you give partner the chance of making a trick with the third best, while you retain the king-card. This underplot becomes dangerous in connection with numerical strength, owing to the greater risk of a ruff; but at the finale, when trumps are scarce, the advantage of leading through the strong hand may be worth obtaining by winning partner's card.

UNDERPLAY.

Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ.

Basis of underplay.

69. This manœuvre is constantly practised by the adept against the uninitiated: its main feature consisting in so keeping back a king-card as to induce a doubt or misconjecture as to its position; through which means, sometimes, partner may make third best, while you still retain the command; at other times, the oppo-

nents may be induced to pursue beyond due bounds an originally promising lead (66). In plain suits, this agency is seldom resorted to with advantage except at the finale; for not only may the second best unexpectedly appear (43), but the king-card may ultimately be ruffed (42).

Efficacy in trumps.

70. The advantage of underplaying trumps is most conspicuous in the establishment of a long suit; when it is not merely requisite to effect the comparatively easy discharge of three rounds in trumps, but also to insure winning the third round, for the assistance of the lead in forcing (*Vide* 32). These then being the conditions which underplay is required to satisfy; if you have ace king four trumps, you must not, even though last player, win both first and second trick therein; or having led from ace four trumps, you must not be persuaded to let down the ace on return of suit: on same principle, with ace queen four trumps, if knave is led, you must not, as usual, put on ace second hand (49), but pass it altogether.

It is of course understood that partner has not collateral strength in trumps; as underplay would then be superfluous: if, on the other hand, partner had led an equivocal card; or if trumps are led by opponents, recourse to such play is more obvious.

FORCING AND RUFFING.

Trumpatur ab kis (the weak), *discardatur ab illis* (the strong).
CANTAB.

71. The virtue of a force may be exemplified by an extreme case—A has six trumps and a septième major; B opponent, has sizième major in trumps, a quart major and tierce major of other suits; now if A leads a trump, he loses a slam; whereas by forcing B, he gains the odd trick. Scarcely a hand is played wherein this principle is not more or less tested (*Comp.* 35). Principle of forcing.

72. A good partner will generally give you credit for at least four trumps, if you force him precipitately; it being an old dogma, not to force partner unless strong yourself; still, you will never scruple in doing so, Data for forcing partner.

a. If he had purposely led for a ruff;

b. If he does not signal for trumps;

c If, after having ruffed, he abstained from leading trumps;

d. If great preponderance in trumps appears against him (*Comp.* 33);

b if he has had an opportunity of
ruffed trumps.

e. If there is probability of a see-saw;

f. If trying for the odd trick (*Comp.* 38).

See-saw.

73. When partner has already a renounce, and you have but a single card of another suit, play this, before pursuing the force; in order to establish the decimating process of a see-saw.

Never ruff, if strong; never fail, if weak.

74. If strong in trumps, never ruff a second-best nor uncertain card, particularly when having a long suit (*Comp.* 34), unless in case of a saw. Never fail to ruff if weak, even though sure of being over-ruffed; or knowing the king-card to lie with partner; the advantages are, employing a powerless trump; demonstrating the poverty of your game to partner; and perhaps leaving in hand the command of the adversaries' reserve suit.

Unequivocal ruff.

75. Under any circumstances, it is indispensable to nip a long suit in the bud; it being better to part with the king-trump, than to allow the opponent to be discarding after you: be careful, however, not to ruff higher than the occasion may warrant.

Superficial players exaggerate the extravagance of ruffing with the king-trump; forgetting that the ace can make but one trick, while the ruff may obstruct several. When, however, you have no winning cards, the ruff might be suspended, till one of the adversaries, becoming exhausted, would at least be unable to re-enter in that suit; but this position is rarely tenable, except at double dumby.

Inferences from discard

76. As a refusal to be forced indicates a long suit

with strength in trumps (74), the discard probably belongs to a third suit, of which there may still be a remnant in hand; consequently, the adversaries should hasten to get out the king-card thereof without prejudice: if, however, a high card had been sacrificed, it is probable that the discarder has already established a double renounce, having only trumps and a long suit remaining.

Should the ruff have merely been temporarily declined, or from fear of an over-ruff, the above presumptions become stronger; and the precaution of playing the king-card of the discarded suit is more urgent.

King-card *in petto.*

77. If partner discards from your best suit, it is right, if strong in trumps, to force him with a loose card, reserving the best for the future command.

Repudiated force.

78. When partner declines to ruff a winning card, lead trumps *instanter;* the highest if weak; conversely, when an opponent declines, avoid the fatuity of forthwith leading trumps, or otherwise shifting the suit; instead of unswervingly pursuing the force, and giving partner the chance of a counter-renounce.

Impolicy of forcing both opponents.

79. Never allow one opponent to be making loose trumps, while the other is discarding; the extent of this error is seldom comprehended by unskilful players; who, seeing the good effect of judicious forcing, often attack the strong and weak hand indiscriminately. *Let not the strong discard, while the feeble ruff.*

Thirteenth card.

80. A thirteenth card is usually employed to economize trumps, by making them fall separately: hence, third hand should either put on his best trump, in hope of emancipating partner; or pass it altogether, particularly with a tenace to be led up to. It follows, that if both adversaries hold trumps, and partner has none, it is ruinous to lead a thirteenth card.

Improvident ruff.

81. With five trumps and a poor hand, do not be rashly forced by opponents, who might, by drawing one trump, succeed in establishing a long suit (32); whereas, by remaining close, you may effect the same for partner.

Deference to partner's game.

82. When partner is impatient to exhaust trumps, it is unpardonable to hoard up a solitary remnant, for the cross-purpose of ruffing, instead of directly abetting his object: such a ruff is commonly worse than useless; for if this is partner's suit, you do but "encumber him with help."

HINTS AT FINALE.

Hic labor, hoc opus est.

83. The difficulty at the finale consists, not in dealing with obvious data, but in mentally tracing out the latent positions. Loose card.

With all winning cards except one, play the loose card, for the chance of partner making second best; which he could not do, if kept till the last. Loose trump

84. With only a loose trump and tenace; play the former, to get led up to.

85. Similarly with only king three in suit, and a loose card; lead the latter, as the best chance for king is to be led up to. King &c. with lead.

86. Holding all the trumps except the best, lead the smallest; to show partner that you have the remainder, and to prevent the king-trump from stopping his suit, with the contingency of gaining tenace in the next round. Long trumps v king-trump.

87. It follows, that it is impolite to play out the

king-trump when the rest are in one hand; as it might stop the career of an opponent, who may never recover the lead. If both adversaries hold trumps, it is generally right to draw two for one.

Minor tenace.

88. Remaining with minor-tenace, against tenace guarded, *e. g.* knave nine, against queen ten and another; you should lead knave, if you suspect the ten to be single.

Running a card.

89. With such cards as knave nine eight, against ten guarded; by "running" the eight, you may make every trick.

Tenace, &c. in second hand.

90. Supposing second hand (B) remains with tenace in trumps, and king of another suit guarded; eldest hand (A) holding minor-tenace, and the corresponding ace: if A leads the ace, B may, by sacrificing his king, bring it to an equal chance, whether he wins three or two tricks; whereas by preserving king, three tricks cannot be made.

King, &c. third hand.

91. Supposing ten tricks being made, you remain with king ten and another; if second hand plays an honour, cover it; otherwise finesse the ten, for a certain trick: wanting two tricks, put on king.

92. With king nine and another, you cannot insure a trick, except by finessing; should, therefore, second hand have capped the nine, the best chance for the king is to put it on.

Coup de main.

93. Remaining with all loose cards, except the best and another trump; partner having the second best

trump, and a winning hand; you should, if forced, cast away the king-trump, so as by returning the other, to give partner the uncontrolled lead.

To exemplify this masterly stroke—The score is four all: A, having six tricks turned, remains with ten seven of trumps, and two hearts, one of which he leads; B (second hand) has knave eight of trumps, and two clubs; C has two loose trumps, and the other hearts; D (fourth hand) has king and another trump, with the other clubs: here, D, seeing it impossible to win every other trick, without partner has either the best trumps, or a successful finesse therein, ruffs with king, and leads the loose trump; thereby showing what scientific play may effect.

94. The following case of playing to points is of frequent occurrence: nine tricks to be made, the leader has two forcing cards and two loose trumps, against two king-trumps. Here it entirely depends on the score, whether he may venture to lead a trump for the chance of the others being divided; or whether he must abide by the certainty of gaining two tricks by forcing; had the opponents made five tricks, and only wanted the odd, the former would be the *sole* chance of saving the game.

Critical predicament

In the absence of antecedent data, it is 11 to 3 against either adversary holding both the king-trumps.

95. Remaining with only two suits; one consisting of winning cards, the other of ace and another; by isolating the ace in discarding, the chance of partner's

assistance in forcing out a long-trump, is much deteriorated.

SYNOPSIS OF ODDS AT SHORT WHIST.

The peculiar nature of the various phases, and fluctuating elements of whist, renders it impossible to construct an exact mathematical scale of the odds at every stage of the game. Empirical data afford the only foundation for the following calculations, which are generally accepted, as the most approximate results derivable from experience and conventional adoption.

With the deal, { 1 to *love* is 5 to 4 ; 4—*love* „ 2 — 1 ; 4—1 „ 7 — 4 ; 3—4 „ 103½ — 100 } on the game.

The usual odds laid on the rubber, by the winners of the first game, are 5 to 2: but it is mathematically demonstrable, that the precise odds are 3 to 1.

After winning the first game, the odds on the rubber, *with the deal*, are

At 1 to *love* about 7 to 2	At 3 to *love* about 9 to 2
„ 2 — *love* „ 4 — 1	„ 4 — *love* „ 5 — 1

It is nearly 13—7 and 27—2 against the deal counting respectively two and four by honours.

It is nearly 20—7 and 23—1 against the non-dealers so counting.

It is 25—16 (about 3—2) against honours being divided.

DUMBY.

THE lowest cut takes Dumby for partner, with the choice of seats and deal. The laws are the same as at the parent game, with this exception, that Dumby cannot revoke: since fraud cannot lie with the complicity of the adversaries. Dumby is not exempt from the penalty of misleading, because a mislead is often of vital import, and if no penalty attached thereto, the experiment would be continually attempted.

The whole policy of the assailants' game consists in leading through Dumby's strong suits, and up to the weak; the return of partner's lead being, in most cases, of secondary consideration.

This game eminently displays the rationale of some of the most important maxims at whist; E.G.

The expediency of leading a strengthening card to partner.

The benefit of pursuing an old suit in preference to a fresh weak one.

The importance of *placing* the lead.

The mischief of forcing the strong and weak hand indiscriminately: and the proper application of a thirteenth card.

The policy of retaining the command of the adversaries' suit.

Deschapelles calculates that between third-rate players, Dumby has the advantage of about 5 to 4 in the short game; between first-rate players, the same advantage is in favour of the opponents; while between second-rate players, the battle is strictly even.

DOUBLE DUMBY

Is the most favourable variety of Whist for the best player; but is especially recommended to pupils, as the best mode of studying positions of finesse and tenace.

HUMBUG

Is two-handed Whist; the alternate hands being discarded. Each honour counts one, with preference to seniority, *i. e.* the ace first, then the king, and so on.

E. G. If A is 4, and has the ace, while B is three, having all the minor honours, A will be game, if B cannot count out by tricks.

In this game it is self-evident, that the safest leads are from sequences, and that the main policy is to establish as many tenaces as possible.

FRENCH HUMBUG

Is an improvement on the former game; each player having the option of exchanging one of the alternate hands for his own, which cannot afterwards be looked at. Honours do not count if divided: otherwise two honours count one, and four honours two points.

THREE-HANDED WHIST

Is when three persons each play their own hand independently; the hand opposite the dealer being discarded unseen.

The game is ten up: each trick above four counts one; honours counting individually, as at Humbug.

COMPARISON BETWEEN LONG AND SHORT WHIST.

At long whist the game is ten up: honours are not counted at the score of nine, but may be called at eight.

At short whist the game is five up: honours are not counted at the score of four, and are never called.

In either system, tricks count before honours, excepting only in the call.

Notwithstanding the proportion of the respective scores is as 10 to 5, yet experience teaches that three long games average the same period of time as four of the short: in this latter ratio, therefore, short whist is the more convenient to supernumeraries awaiting their turn to cut in.

Another benefit arising from the shorter game is its tendency to the improvement of play. The attack and defence in shorts is precisely similar to five-all at longs; in either case five tricks with one honour being necessary to save game. But, inasmuch as the loss of a critical odd trick must be oftener fatal in a score of 5 than of 10, a closer attention in playing to points is imposed, than when the termination of the game is not immediately at stake; and the merit of steady play accordingly receives a greater recompense. Owing, however, to the greater margin for chance in the counting of honours, the prospects of an indifferent player are not deteriorated, while a good player may sooner escape the annoyance of a bad partner.

If it were desirable to render the game more dependent upon skilful play, the honours might be halved, 4 honours scoring only 2, and three honours only 1. Arnaud, Major A. and others, object that the exorbitant scale for honours gives an undue preponderance to chance in the short game; but this is just the condition for entering into the compromise on the part of indifferent players, who would otherwise unquestionably be placed *hors de combat.*

WILFUL REVOKES.

The question is sometimes mooted, whether it is fair to revoke on purpose. The case for the defence is, that A is privileged to commit the revoke, providing he is ready to succumb to the penalty on detection. The reply is, that A is not justified in breaking the law, because he is willing to abide the consequence. But the analogy between the infraction of the penalties of a pastime and those of civil jurisprudence is imperfect; the proper issue being, what is the understanding between the players when they sit down. Now a game is constructed of certain conventional conditions, embodied in the form of laws; these conditions being such as may be most conducive to positive amusement, not merely to the negative prevention of abuse. Consequently any one joining in a game, wherein calculation is an inherent quality, is presumed to accept these conditions; and any laches, which defeats the rationale of the game, is supposed to arise from inadvertence: hence, indeed, the law specially permits the interference of the partner in guarding against a revoke.

It is plain, therefore, that a wilful revoke is at all times a breach of the natural conditions of the game, and consequently of the understanding between players.

But the moral obliquity of the proceeding is most heinous, in cases where the full penalty cannot attach, as in the case of a desperate game. If A is *love*, and can only save the game by revoking, he may win, and cannot lose; or A might prefer the risk of sinking a present score if detected, to the certainty of losing the game if he does not revoke: either stage of which policy, the adoption of the by-law suggested in *page* 17 would serve to meet.

The question remains, whether A, having made a revoke, may properly endeavour to escape detection by repeating it. We consider that, the laches having once inadvertently arisen, infringement of the rationale of the game cannot further be pleaded. Moreover, the penalty being undoubtedly the more severe on account of the difficulty of detection, it should hardly be expected that any one shall be instrumental to his own conviction; particularly when his only hope of escape is clogged by the risk of additional punishment.

THE STRICT GAME.

ALL card-laws are necessarily suspicious and severe; consequently trivial offences are sometimes visited with apparently unmerited harshness. The penalties of whist, however, are not so strict as those of piquet; and various proposals have been made for augmenting their present rigour. It is mistaken clemency to overlook the slightest *faux pas*, for if the law once ceases to be carried out in its integrity, the door is thrown open to constant bickering and laxity of play. The opinions enunciated by Mrs. Battle on this point deserve to be universally adopted—"*A clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game.*"—"This," says Charles Lamb, "was the celebrated *wish* "of old Sarah Battle, who, next to her devotions, loved a good "game of whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, "your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a "hand if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that "they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one "game and lose another; that they can while away an hour "very agreeably at a card table, but are indifferent whether they "play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipped a "wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable "triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a "whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at "cards, but only play at playing them.

"Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as "I do, from her heart and soul, and would not, save upon a

"striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table "with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined "enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions; she hated favours. "She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her "adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought "a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword "(her cards) 'like a dancer.' She sat bolt upright; and neither "showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours.

"I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the "best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was "her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; "or ring for a servant till it was fairly over. She never intro- "duced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its "process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; "and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century "countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a "literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take "a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he "thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and "then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She "could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she "wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her "business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,— "and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards,—over a "book."